



HOW TO ORGANIZE AN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE DAY OF ACTION

After recent attacks on immigrant and refugee communities at both the state and federal level, it is time to come together and lift up the voices of our communities! Our movement is about building the world we believe in, one that is welcoming, diverse, and inclusive. So let's lift up that vision and demand that those in power follow our lead.

What can you do?

1) Organize a press conference, rally, or other public event

2) Visit, Call, or Send a Postcard to Your Legislator

- Find your PA state legislators: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>
- Find your US representatives: <http://www.whoismyrepresentative.com>

1. Visit the local office(s) of your legislator(s):

- Visiting your legislator's office is the most effective way of gaining their support. These visits are an opportunity for legislators to hear directly from constituents about key issues affecting the communities they represent. Visiting representatives from the district where you live is most important.

2. Call your legislator

- Sample Script: "Hello, I am calling to speak to [Name of Representative] and express my support for immigrant and refugee communities in PA. As a constituent of [Name of Representative], I expect them to introduce and vote for legislation that will [pick one of the issues that you care most about], and I expect them to vote against any legislation that attempts to criminalize or punish immigrants and refugees.
- Sample Script: "Hello, I'm calling to speak to [Name of Representative] and ask that they introduce and support legislation that will [pick one of the issues that you care most about]. I would also like to ask that they vote against bills like [name one or more of the bills introduced this year].

3. Send a postcard to your legislator

- Buy some pre-paid postcards and write simple messages on each card stating your support for immigrant and refugee communities and one issue/or policy that you would like to see the legislator take action on.

3) Thank the Mayors of cities in PA who have stood up for immigrants & refugees

- Mayor Jim Kenney, Philadelphia: @PhillyMayor, (215) 686-2181
- Mayor Bill Peduto, Pittsburgh: @BillPeduto, 412-255-2626
- Mayor Kim Bracey, York: @MayorBracey, 717-849-2221
- Mayor Rick Grey, Lancaster: @CityofLancPA, 717-291-4701
- Mayor Elizabeth Goreham, State College: @MayorGoreham, 814-234-7110

- *Sample Tweets:*
 - .[@Twitter Handle] thank you for supporting immigrant & refugee communities! Can we work together to do more to #StoptheHate? #NoBanNoWall
 - .[@Twitter Handle] thank you for supporting immigrants & refugees! How about working together to create #SanctuaryforAll? #StoptheHate #NoBanNoWall
 - .[@PhillyMayor/@BillPeduto] thank you for standing up to @POTUS agenda of hate! We support you! #StoptheHate #NoBanNoWall

4) Post your message on social media using the hashtags: #PALovesImmigrants #RefugeesWelcome #StoptheHate #NoBanNoWall

5) Sign one of these petitions:

- Tell President Trump You Stand With Refugees: hias.org/take-action
- Tell Mayor Peduto to Expand Sanctuary: <http://bit.do/mijente-peduto>
- Tell Mayor Kenney to Expand Sanctuary: <http://bit.do/mijente-kenney>

6) Donate money to a local community organization(s).

MESSAGING AND TALKING POINTS

From Philadelphia Family Unity Network (PFUN) Value Statement: We believe that quality housing, quality education, quality healthcare, workers' rights, and safe communities are human rights. We dedicate our work to ensuring that all people have the right to remain in their chosen communities, regardless of economic status, immigration status, and history with the criminal legal system.

What Do We Want? A State that Welcomes and Protects Immigrants and Refugees:

- Policies that ensure local law enforcement does not ask about immigration status or act in any way as immigration (ICE) officers.
- School policies that welcome and protect students and parents regardless of immigration status, religion, race, sexual orientation, or disability
- An end to stop and frisk, racial profiling, and other police practices that target and criminalize immigrants and communities of color
- Increased support for ESL and citizenship programs
- To shut down the Berks Family Detention Center
- Tuition equity for all students enrolled at universities and colleges in Pennsylvania regardless of immigration status
- Access to driver's licenses for all

Message Points:

- Immigrant and refugee communities make PA stronger
- Cities that welcome and protect immigrant communities are safer communities¹
- Regardless of who they are or where they come from - whether citizen, immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker - everyone is equally deserving of dignity, welcome, and protection from harm.
- Immigrants are an important part of local community revitalization. The arrival of immigrants/refugees has spurred economic growth and helped revive cities and towns across Pennsylvania.

¹ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/01/26/297366/the-effects-of-sanctuary-policies-on-crime-and-the-economy/>

Messaging Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Good/Bad immigrant narrative: examples of this are “felons not families” or “we are workers not criminals”
 - Framing some immigrants as more deserving of protection divides our communities and continues the idea that some people are “more human” or “less human”
 - This messaging also feeds anti-black narratives around criminality
- “Sanctuary” cities/schools: most policies or statements that claim “sanctuary” status do not provide meaningful protections against ICE and none of them halt deportations.
 - The term “sanctuary” is part of a long movement of physically protecting families from being deported. That history should be honored by ensuring claiming “sanctuary” status is connected to community-led definitions and campaigns
 - Alternatives could include: human rights zone, welcoming campus, 4th Amendment city

Responding to Some Myths and Misinformation:

- “Anyone Can Come to the U.S. as a Refugee”: Under U.S. and international law, a refugee is someone outside his or her own country with a well-founded fear of persecution in that country based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The United States is one of 28 resettlement countries.
- “We Don’t Know Who These People Are”: The United States decides which refugees are resettled, and refugees are the most thoroughly screened individuals in the United States. Refugees must pass through a series of security screenings, including biographic and biometric checks, medical screenings, forensic document testing, and in-person interviews. The information examined to confirm a refugee’s identity is checked against law enforcement and intelligence databases, including those of the National Counterterrorism Center, Department of Defense, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of State, and Department of Homeland Security. If there is any doubt about who a refugee is, he or she will not be admitted to the United States.
- “We Are Accepting Too Many Refugees”: The vast majority of the world’s refugees live in countries that neighbor the countries that they have fled. Available to less than 1% of the world’s refugees, resettlement is the last resort for refugees who cannot return to their homes and are not permitted to rebuild their lives in a nearby country. Last year over 65 million people were displaced from their country, the U.S. accepted less than 100,000 refugees.
- “People Just Need to Get In Line”: There are only 4 ways to get into the US legally: 1) offered a job by a US employer because of a skill; 2) escaping persecution; 3) joining a close family member in the US; 4) winning the green-card lottery. There is no line for most individuals.